Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

LETTERS OF WILLIAM BYRD, FIRST.

(From his letter book in the Collection of the Virginia Historical Society.)

(Continued)

TO MR. NORTH

Virg'a ye 19th of July 1690

S^{r}

This accompanys Rudds by whom have Sent you 100 H^{d}: Tobo I would willingly have Sent twice or thrice as much, but have been Strangely prevented, depending on those ships that were concerned in the Country would have come or those Gen^{t} that Sent them otherway's would have secured Some fraight for us, this made mee neglect the first part of ye year when Some fraight might been had or ships at least from Boston, York, or Phildelphia, but twas convenient to keep us in the Darke. You are pleased to Say you wrote Severall times, but twas as Seldom & imcertain as might bee. Tatnall (you Say) promised ye Virg'a Owners of ye ship Samll fraight in ye first place, but hee Saith you would take no fraight nor ever Spoke to him about itt, & utterly refuses to take any Goods unless they goe consigned to the owners of his Ship. You tooke fraight on board Smith in ye Diamond, (though hee came to ye upper parts of James River) & his day's were out ere hee could hear any body to demand itt, & orderd Bradly & Bray to dispose to any of yor Sweetscented(1) friends, the Aronoca Ones were not worthy yor notice.

(1) From the point of view of a dealer in tobacco, Virginia was divided into two sections according to the kind grown, whether Sweet Scented, or Orinoco. This letter gives a good idea of the many difficulties a colonist had to undergo in trading with the mother country, or rather with some of the merchants.

It is a little unkind to detain all our Acco^{ts} wee are Sensible what time there was from Ordering, y^{e}* * * * nay from ye greatest part being in downes ere ye Bengall or the diamond came downe, and wee have shrewd Reasons to believe our Tobo was Sold long enough before.

But to wave all this, though you ought to give ye Loosers leave to Speake, I have 48 H^{ds} of Tobo on board this ship more y'n ye 100 consign'd to you, w:^{h} belong to a Charter party of m^{rs} Perry & Lanes & goes to them, So you must agree itt as well as you can

ffor ye Samll wee have wrote to you a Gen'll letter, & wish you would either buy or Sell, that wee might know what wee have to doe

Iwould willingly have Sent you Some Skins & fures, but had not interest to gett fraight for Six H^{ds} Old Emberly (as well as ye rest) denying itt

Bradly must Send with this River & hee hath p'tly promised mee to take them in, w:^{h} itt may hee may doe if hee doth not forgett itt

The Goods I rec^{d} all but (thinke you were much abused by Some of ye blades you dealt w:^{h} last year) a parcell of norebone Lace, w:^{h} by no means can bee attained nor heard of, itt comes just to £2 10-01 & note, but know not who bought of * * * * *

Lardner w:^{h} his Small ware in Some things charges att Least 20 ℔ C^{t} more than others, wch is alltogether insufferable, & indeed I may Say generally yoy buy considerably dearer than other people.

I am Sorry wee have occasion to Say though you buy dear, yet you don't Sell So, as Witness all our Tob'o, & Ime Sure my Bever was better then Some Sold for 18d & 2s in ye pound more

Notwithstanding all w:^{h} & whats ye worst that I cannot See my Acco^{t} I have ventured to Send my Invoice for next year, but not being able to guess how affairs may Stand I desire you rather then I might remain much in Debt, that you would abate Somewhat, though I hope if this Tob'o gets home & ye skins &c' I designe by Bradly, there may bee no great danger of itt.

I have inclosed a note allso for Some things for my Selfe, wch I hope you will packe by them selves, & tho I desired ye Same last year, yett wee were att a considerable trouble for want of So doeing, besides ye Hazard of transporting goods to & fro.

I have not yet sent for any wine for (tho I have been a good customer to ye Choice Lad) I find much better wine from other people then from him, & hee charges as high as any body else. I hope you will take nothing herein unkindly for its not my owne Sence alone, but I find most y^t^ one concern'd wth you in this River, are making daily complaints, but if you reckon them more trouble y'n benefit they may otherwise dispose of their concerns, if yo'u would let y'm know so much.

I have orderd my Son for London & hope you will bee kind to him as occasion offers, w'n you see see him give him my blessing as allso to ye Girls; wth my most Humble Service to m^rs^ North & all yor little ones.

Wee Spent yor kind token wth chearfullness but E. H. (whither hee follows T. S. or no I know not) was not there. I suppose they designe you a returne herewith or by Bradly.

Please to give my Humble Service to our friends, &accept the Same your selfe from

S^r^

Yo^r^ Humble Servt
WB

To m^r^ North & Ruds

To Perry and Lane

Virg'a July ye 21th 1690

Gen^t^

This I hope will come safe to your Hands by Capt Morgan wth 201 H^ds^ Tob'o & 4 of skins & ffurres, the Invoice of ye latter inclosed, as allso ye Bill of Lading for ye Tob'o. I wrote to you two days Since att large by Ruddes, & Sent a Duplicate thereof by ye James, & have little now to adde, I wish all

Safe to you, & could have been extreamly Satisfied had I obtained but a reasonable p'portion of ffraight amongst others, for (notwithstanding I have Sold above 100 H^{ds} here) I want fraight for 200 more, but its not impossible but I may find an Oppertunity yett to Ship the best of them, for receiving them lately, I find much very bad, as I doubt you'l doe att London, where if ever Tob'o were worth anything itt must now, for I belive (if all ye Ships gett well home w:^{h} God Send they may) you will not find any Quantity to answer the m^{r}kett & most of that wretched Stuff.

Inclosed is an Invoice for Goods next year, w:^{h} if things doe not answer I would not have you Send above halfe what Sent for, excepting Clothing, tools & necessarys for my family.

I am prety well Stockd wth Indian Goods, but find a dull trade of itt here, little Bever & Skins to bee had, the Indians att War wth each other, & troubles on all hands.

Pray lett mee have all cut Smoothd plains hereafter for they are best liked of.

It Seems very feasible to mee, to hire Small ships in ye West country (I doubt not but under London ffreight) & to Send y'm early hither, where wee could dispatch them, & having a Winter Passage may bee as Safe as under a Convoy, I hope if you will not take that course, others will, that wee may not ever bee instanced as wee are to, Lade the ships when Tob'o is worth nothing, but when theres any Hopes of profitt, then wee must bee last Served & take itt as a great favo^{r} if wee may have a little after ye Owners, Master & Sailors are Served, but enough of this, I wish itt may learne us more witt.

I rec^{d} a Small box of Cut Tob'o(2) ℘ Cap ^{t}Morgan, its not mention'd I returne whomever Sent itt my hearty thanks for it was very acceptable.

Pray my blessing to ye Children ab^{t} whom I have wrote ℘ Ruddes & ye James my Service to all friends I remain

Gen^{t}

Yo^{r} Humble Servt
W B

To P. L. ℘ Morgan

(2) "Cut tobacco" probably was tobacco prepared for smoking.

To Mr. Methwold

Virg'a July ye 25th 1690

Hon^d S^r

Irec^d ye favo^r of yours if ye 24th of Xb^r & wish I might any way bee capable of Serveing you a p'son to whom I have So great obligations.

Last fall I saved all ye Stones & Seeds you desired, but lying So long in ye Country, & indeed there was not that care taken as ought, I being abroad most of this Spring & Sumer, that coming now to examine them, I find most of them perished & the Stones (that ye Rats have left in ye Caske are Quite dry) wormes & vermin having destroyed most of ye other, these few that appear best I have herewith Sent Viz^t. Pappas Arbor; Rhus Lentiser folus Sassafras & ye Laurus Tulep-fera, wc^h are in a Small box put on board Ruddes, directed for your selfe to bee left att m^r Lees

I will indeavo^r to Save all ye rest next fall, but fear if I gett not a winter Passage for them, most of them Spoil

In the Same Box I have Sent you an acco^t of a Pretended mine open'd here last Winter, Some thinking all had been gold that glister'd talk'd high, whilst others unwilling to put them out of their golden Dreams, assisted to carry on the designe, hoping Something usefull might there bee found, An Acco^t of ye Pit is in a pc of paper in ye Box, wth Samples of whatever itt affords.

I desire you to shew itt my Ld Effingham when hee is att Leasure I would not presume to trouble his L^dship wth itt. I would request you allso to shew itt to m^r Charles Howard, or Some of your Virtuosi, that I might have their opinion therein:

Now Hon^d S^r I must humbly beg your pardon for this trouble in the last affair, & hope yor goodness will excuse mee

Please to doe mee the Hon^r as to give my humble Service to yor Lady, & accept the Same Hon^d S^r from

Yo^r most oblidged humble Servt

W B

To m^r Methwold ℘ Ruddes

To————

Virg'a July ye 28 1690

S^r

I rec^d yo^rs by Bradly ab^t 2 months Since & immediately wrote to one of my Acquanitance in those p'ts to inquire w^t was become of ye Land, who were ye p'sent possessors of itt, & to Send mee an Acco^t of the Value, in answer to w:^h I rec^d last weeke the inclosed, by w:^h you may understand fully how the case Stands, I doubt not but to bee better Satisfyed in Octob^r, I suppose there may bee Some what had for ye poor people but I fear (if what m^r Thruston writes bee truth) not much. I shall indeavour w^t I may in itt: or w^t else I can Serve you please freely to Comand.

(My Service to all friends & accept ye Same yor selfe from)

Sr Yo^r Humble Servt

W B

To JOHN POVEY (3)

S^r

I rec the favo^r of 3 frm you this year & must ever acknowledge my Selfe oblidged to m^r Blathwayt & yo^rselfe, for your assistance in my Affairs especially in m^r Aylways buisiness, I have Severall times given order to m^rs Perry & Lane to indearo^r to purchase him out, & doubt not but wth yor assisrance & direction itt might bee Safely done (if hee will Sell) without incurring ye Penalty of any Statute against buying of Offices

The Lt Govr & Councell here have appointed m^r Secretary Cole in their name to write to ye L^ds of ye Committee for Plantations, my Ld Shrewsbury & my Ld Effingham to address their Majistys that no p'son hold any Office here, but Such as actually inhabit ye Country, a Copy of w:^h Order is inclosed to w:^h I refer you.

Inclosed is a letter fo^r Col'o Ludwell to m^r Aylway by wc^h you may see what hee then intended & may bee reall Still for

(3) John Povey, Clerk of the Privy Council. Col. Ludwell was Philip Ludwell, Sr. and his son-in-law. Daniel Parke, Jr. Col. Bacon was Nathaniel Bacon, Sr., then President of the Council, and acting Governor.

ought I know, but two days Since I understand from himselfe that hee & his Son in Law m^r Parke designe for Engl^d, whither either of y'm have any designe y^t way or not I know not

My Acco^ts will come herewith as allso Duplicates of Last years, I have got most of ye War^ts indorsed w:^h I suppose may bee Sufficient, & hope its not expected my Ld Effingham nor those in Engl^d could give rec^ts, the Lt Govr Saith hee need not, Since hee Signes ye War^t I had been more carefull but Col'o Bacon, hee onely used to returne ye War^ts & never found any Stop: Its customary here to transfer War^ts fro' one to another & they past Current tor money or payment of Debts.

In ye Q^t Rents you will find Lower Norfolke 2 years & one of Northampton Sold att 3 & C^t ℔ I hope ye Order of Councell here, will give Satisfaction therein

I have discoursed Col'o Bacon ab^t ye Ball. of his Acco^t but hee denyeth itt affirmeing he hath pd my Ld Effingham a great part of itt, & hath other charges to come in allso that hee designes to Acco^t to ye tresury himselfe

I have rec^d £ 10:15 of m^r Secretary Cole on yor Acco^t w:^h w^th £20 more (of w:^h I beg your acceptance you will receive) by a bill of Exge inclosed as allso one more for yor Salary this last year

I earnestly beg yor favourable assistance in purchaseing m^r Aylway out that I might bee att ease in my lpace, wherein no man shall more faithfully Serve their Majesty's & on all Occasions ever acknowledge himselfe in all truth

S^r

Yo^r most Oblidged Humble Servt

W B

Virg'a July 30th 1690

To Jn'o Povey Esqr

Duplicate

1 ℔ ye Comadore

1 ℔ Morgan

To Lord Effingham

My L^d

I rec^d ye Hono^r of severall from yor Excellency this year, & could have wished I had been more capeable of Serveing yor L^d ship here then I am, that I might in some sense acknowledged my gratitude where I am So much Oblidged

Inclosed your L^{d} ship will receive your Acco^{t} wth Ex^{e}: on mess^{rs} Perry & Lane for your Exlncys dues till Midsummer, though there hapned Some Odd days between your Exlncy, ye Lt Govr & the P'sident yet I dare Say yor L^{d}ship hath your full Due

What money I have rec^{d} of ye respective Collecto^{rs} I have given yor L^{d}ship Creditt for, but m^{r} President Bacon producing m^{r} Blathwayts letter that hee was to have ¼ part of the perquisites, they have allowed him those of the Ships. I rec^{d} Col'o Lees but Last night, but have brought itt to yor L^{d}ships Acco^{t} Yo^{r} Exlncy will find by my Acco^{t} the Least Auditt as hath been knowne, many ships not being clear'd & had I staid for them, itt had been impossible for mee to transmitt my Acco^{ts} till the ffall.

The Lt Govern^{r} & Councell thought itt most convenient to make up yor Exlncys Acco^{t} till Midsumer & that then I might Send yor Salary by Quarterly payments, & its hoped more money will come in by Octob^{r} Court, when (God willing) I intend to procure the Lt Govern^{rs} Order for ye first Quarter

The H^{ds} for ye Q^{t} rents I have answered as formerly yor Exlncy's Order for Tob'o not arriveing till Late, when none that was Good was to bee had, nor fraight on any Acco^{t} I have answer'd for Henrico, Charles City, & Surry, Col'o Lear for Nanzimond, & Col'o Jenifer for Accomacke, m^{r} President had New Kent, Yorke, James City, Isle of Wright, Lower Norfolke both years & Northampton, I suppose hee will answer for them to Yo^{r} Exlncy, or if hee doth to mee, I will Acco^{t} for them, m^{r} Wormeley had Rapahanocke & Middlesex, & Col'o Lightfoot Gloucester, I suppose they will answer, Col'o Cole hath answered for Elizabeth City & Warwicke; ffor Ordinary's (4) wee have none in our County, m^{r} Cocke having left of these two years, Marriages &c^{d} I suppose Col Cole will give yor L^{d}ship a full Acco^{t} Yo^{r} L^{d}ship will find I have charged the revenue w:^{h} £–170:3:1 on the Acco^{t} of ye Deptford Ketch w:^{h} was by Order of ye presidt & Councell, I have writ to ye Com^{rs} if y^{e} & charged ye Same on y'm w:^{h} if p^{d} I shall give ye Revenue Credit for ye Same

(4) Cocke's ordinary had been at the county seat, Varina. This lack of any tavern in Henrico did not continue long.

I returne yor Exlncy my humble & hearty thankes for yor Extraordinary kindness in m^{r} Aylways affair, and beg the Continuance of yor L^{d}ships favo^{r} therein. Col'o Ludwell not long since promised to quit his pretensions & gave mee a letter for m^{r} Aylway to y^{t} purpose, but two days Since hee acquainted mee hee designed for England, on what Occasion I know nott, I have wrote to m^{r} Perry to buy m^{r} Ayleway out, & desired m^{r} Povey's assistance herein, as I allso earnestly beg yor Excellencey, who will receive a letter fro' m^{r} Secretary Cole on behalfe of this Government, to supplicate their Majistys no p'sons may injoy Offices, a place of trust, but Such as shall bee inhabitants of the Country a^{d} w:^{h} I hope yor Exlncy will promote.

There hath been some dispute ab^{t} yor Exlncy's House rent when the year expires; by a Copy of Col'o Bacon last Acco^{t} (sent mee by m^{r} Povey) its S^{d} to end ye 21th of June, but by yor Exlncys War^{t} to mee last year its S^{d} to end ye 25th of March as allso this year I have just menconed it to m^{r} Blathwayt who will know ye certainty thereof by former Acco^{ts}

I humbly beg yor Exlncys pardon for this Rambling letter being in a Hurry to dispatch my Acco^{ts} (by the Comadore) but no buisiness shall ever hinder mee from being wth all Sincerity

My L^{d}
Yo^{r} Exlncy's most Oblidged Humble Servt
W B

30th July 1690
To my Ld Effingham Duplicate 1 ℘ Comadore
1 ℘ Morgan.

To Mr. Blathwait (5)

Hon^{d} S^{r}

This serves to Accompany my acco^{ts} & tho the Audit was appointed ye 24th instant, the fleet designeing to Sail ye 4th of

(5) William Blathwayt, Auditor General of the American Colonies, and Secretary of the Board of Trade and Plantations.

next moneth, yett many ships have not yett cleared, wc^{h} is the Occasion their Majestys Revenue is this year So low.

I have pd & discharged the Gov^{rs} & Lt Govern^{rs} claims till ye 24 June last, & all others for this last year, as allso £–170:03:01 on ye Acco^{t} of ye Deptford Ketch, by Order of ye President & Councell here, I have charged by Exge the Sum on ye R^{t} Hon'bl^{e} Com^{rs} of his Majestys Navy, wc^{h} if paid I must give Credit to their Maty^{s}Revenue here for ye Same, I have Sent Duplicates of ye Acco^{ts} &c^{d} According to ye s^{d} Order

Upon peruseall of a Copy of Col'o Bacons Last Acco^{t} (sent mee by m^{r} Povey) I find his Exlncy's House rent is S^{d} there to end ye 26th of June, but by the War^{ts} to mee both last year & this is s^{d} to end ye 25th of March, where the mistake is I know.... not but itt may bee rectifyed wth you, who have all the former Acco^{ts}

In this Acco^{t} of Quitrents you will find Lower Norfolke 2 years & Northampton one, Sold at 3 ℔ C^{t}, I could find no p'son would take them, but m^{r} President who offerd that price, I therefore acquainted their Maty^{s} Lt Govr & Councell who thereupon made the Order Sent herewth Since my making up that Acco^{t} I have received £-13:06:08 of Col'o Ludwell & 2 years L^{t} rents of ye Northern necke granted to my Ld Culpeper

I had Severall Small bills for Composition of Eocheats, but cannot yet gett anything considerable in, but (God willing) all I can gett shall bee brought to next years Acco^{t} as allso Some Small fines w:^{h} yet Stand out.

I shall allways indeavour to the utmost of my power faithfully to Serve their Maty^{s} interest, & as far as in mee Lyes promote ye Same, & on all Occasions Remain

Hon^{d} S^{r}
Yo^{r} most Humble & Obedient Servt
W B

Virg'a July ye 30th 1690
To m^{r} Blathwait
Duplicate 1pr Comadore &
1 pr Morgan

Hon^{d} S^{r}

This onely accompany's ye Duplicate of my Last years Acco^{ts} wth ye receipts & indorsments, w:^{h} wth Some trouble I have obtained, but Understanding the other p^{te} is come to Hand shall not give you farther trouble, but for ye future shall indeavo^{r} to bee more punctuall, & wth all fidelity to discharge the trust reposed in mee

And for ever Remain

Hon^{d} S^{r}

Yo^{r} most Obedient Humble Servt

W B

50th July 1690

To m^{r} Blathwayt

Duplicate

1 pr Conadore & y^{e}

Other ℘ Capt Morgan

To Perry and Lane

Virg'a July ye 51th 1690

Gen^{t}

This onely accompanys the Comadore wth bills of Ex^{e}: for £ 1966:19:04:½ the 2^{d} I designe (God willing) ℘ Morgan, & is to Acquaint you that I have drawne Severall bills on you herunder menconed w:^{h} I hope you will hono^{r} allso take care to deliver ye inclosed According to directions, and Send those few things in ye inclosed note to m^{r} Gauler, allso some wyne

I have Sent for, for ye Councell, wherein I desire you to take Col'o Ludwells Advice who hath promised all care shall bee taken therein, I shall Suddenly write again by Capt Smith who takes mee in a little Tobacco &c, In ye mean time wth best respects & Service to all where due I remain

Gen^{t}

Yo^{r} Humble Servt

W B

To P. L. ℘ Comadore

To Mr. Hutchinson (6) in New England

Virg'a August ye 1st 1690

S^r

I have given you the trouble of 2 this sumer allready, & this now comes to cover the inclosed bill of Exce wc^h would desire you (if you receive itt) to returne in any Comoditys that may best Suit this Country (fish excepted) Muscovado Sug^r (if cheap & good) is now wanted, Good Madera wine or Rum wc^h may bee cheapest wth you, Some turnery especiall a few of yor Sieves to clean Wheat, or w^t else you find most suitable; I onely desire you would Oblidge whoever you Send yor goods by, to deliver up James River as high as Westopher, w:^h is ab^t two miles above where the Great Ships ride

I wrote to you by my former (if possible) to procure a ship or two for London, ffraight continueing yett very Scarce, if you could Send them in early att the ffall the Sooner the better, they may make their owne termes; I would willingly ingage for a whole Ship nay two or 3 not exceeding 150 Tun each att £-10:00:00, I desire (as soon as may bee) you would lett mee have a few Lines from you, by w:^h I might understand whither any hopes you way or not; Shall not farther trouble you att present but wth best respects take Leave, I am

Worthy S^r
Yo^r Humble Servt
W B

To m^r Hutchinson in
New England

To Mr. Harpur

Virg'a August ye 1^s 1690

S^r

I am very Sorry I cannot give you a better Acco^t of yor buisness, I have wrote to Littleton who refers itt Col'o Custis

(6) This was doubtless a member of the family from which later came General Thomas Hutchinson.

& hee will bee att no Certainty, pretending hee will ingage for Tob'o att^{s}:4 ℔ C^{t} as far as the Judgement goes & no farther & that on no other tearmes then as m^{r} Littleton can pay itt, by w:^{h} means you will bee as far to Seeke as ever, not knowing how to Secure fraight for any Quantity certain; this Bearer m^{r} Sheerwood hath been Attorney in ye cause, & hath had £5 of mee allready, hee can fully informe you.

If Col'o Custis would really indearo^{r} itt yor business might come to some good end, hee being Littletons Neighbo^{r} & desirous of Some of his Land might Seave you & himsefe; for my Share, I have been £7 & a H^{de} Tob'o out allready, & am Loth to put you to farther Charge; to renew the Judgem^{t} & put him in prison I fear would avail little; I hope you will excuse my failure, Since I have done w^{t} in mee Lyes, & if you advise any thing more I shall bee ready to Serve you & Remain

Yo^{r} frd & Servt
W B

To m^{r} Harpur
℔ Will Sheerwood

(To be Continued)